

BOOK REVIEWS



FLOWERS AND FERNS IN THEIR HAUNTS. By Mabel Osgood Wright. The Macmillan Company, New York.

The nurse who is temporarily at sea, wondering what to read aloud to the patient who needs amusement of a tranquil nature, cannot do better, in nine cases out of ten, than to send for this charming book, divided into such topics as "The Coming of Spring," "Along the Waterways," "In Silent Woods," "The Drapery of Vines," "The Fantasies of Ferns," and other enticing considerations. The illustrations are of great beauty and variety.

Not only adults, but also children who are old enough to know and care for flowers, will be happily brought through an otherwise dull afternoon by judicious selections from these most attractive pages.

THE AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMAN. By John Howard Cromwell, Ph.B., LL.B. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York and London.

Nothing impresses on one's mind more vividly the vast change which one century or, indeed, one-half of a century, has brought about in the position and circumstances of women than a perusal of this volume. To read over, for instance, Frederika Bremer's "The Four Sisters," a novel of family life in Sweden, with its picture of the complete and humiliating financial and economic dependence of women in the early part of this century, and then to turn to a study of this book of instruction to women upon the management of property, gives a sense of contrast so extreme as to be almost incredible. "The American Business Woman" is a volume of four hundred pages, most carefully and conservatively written by a lawyer whose character and attainments have evidently placed him in the position of adviser to many women, few of whom had had previous training in business-like methods.

The author says in his preface: ". . . No one fact has been more strongly impressed upon me than that the majority of American women are almost entirely ignorant of the ordinary rules and methods of business. . . . This lack of knowledge among women is not at all due to any natural deficiency (on the contrary, . . . women are quick to learn business methods when properly instructed), but it is rather the inevitable result of existing circumstances and conditions. We cannot reasonably look for a contrary state of affairs when we reflect that for ages women have been trained and educated in almost everything except the principles of business, and have been instructed, if not compelled, to leave all matters of business to their fathers, husbands, or brothers. . . . Many a woman who has been left in comfortable circumstances . . . has been reduced to poverty and want because, through lack of education in matters of business, she has been compelled to rely on the judgment of others, whose advice, though perhaps honestly given, has been the worst possible. . . . There is no proper reason why a woman who is possessed of property shall not thoroughly understand and practise the approved methods by which only it may be wisely invested and preserved. Such knowledge, modestly applied, comports

perfectly with the gentle and womanly qualities which the civilized world loves and venerates, . . . and the possible emergencies in which it will prove of almost vital importance are too manifest to require enumeration."

He then proceeds to explain in the most minute and careful manner every province of safe and legitimate investment which a woman may need to understand. He begins by explaining the values of money, rules of economy, and sound principles in regard to the proper ratio of income and expenditure; he teaches every detail relating to the management of check-books, bank-books, and account-books; gives instruction and fundamental principles to guide in the choice of banks and savings-banks, and discusses the pros and cons relating to trust companies, coöperative companies, etc. He then goes on to discuss the general principles of investments and securities: how to distinguish investments from speculation; points out the dangers of the latter, and expounds the whole subject of bonds and stocks; investment corporations and land companies; the selection and management of real estate; mortgages; insurance; the laws of the different States as affecting property; leases and rents; the descent and distribution of property; wills, guardians, executors, etc.; annuities; the property rights of married women, and concludes with a chapter of practical advice on a number of miscellaneous topics.

We know of no other book so much to be recommended to the woman who is endeavoring to amass or to care for the competence which she must look to for the safety of her old age.

DEFINITION OF FOOD AND FOOD ECONOMY.—Food is that which, taken into the body, builds tissues or yields energy. The most healthful food is that which is best fitted to the wants of the user; the cheapest food is that which furnishes the largest amount of nutriment at the least cost; the best food is that which is both healthful and cheap.

The nutritive value of foods depends mainly upon the amounts and proportions of actually nutritive materials which they contain. Of course, the digestibility and the ways in which they "agree and disagree" with different people are important factors of the nutritive value.

"We live not upon what we eat, but upon what we digest."—W. O. ATWATER.

